

CAL FIRE EEO needs

CAL FIRE's Equal Employment Opportunity Program is recruiting EEO Counselors

By Michele Villados, staff services analyst, Sacramento Headquarters

CAL FIRE is currently recruiting for EEO Counselors. Counselors act as coordinators for the services provided by the EEO staff. Do you think you have the right stuff?

EEO Counselors are an important part of the Department's process for resolving EEO issues. As the first point of contact for employees with concerns, an EEO Counselor is called upon to be friendly and approachable while remaining impartial. This is a critical component of the role, as it isn't a counselor's job to take sides or offer advice, but to listen carefully and to accurately document the complaining party's concerns. Often, this includes asking carefully thought out questions to obtain relevant information. This can be challenging, as the complaining party may be experiencing anxiety, frustration, anger or other emotions as a result of his/her concerns. It is the counselor's job to see past those emotions to clarify the employee's concerns.

EEO Counselors must be trustworthy. It is essential that concerned employees have confidence in their counselor's discretion. If you're the sort of person who can keep a secret—the kind of person others seek out to confide in—you might be right for this responsibility. If you're receptive to the needs of others, and recognize that those needs vary from indi-

vidual to individual depending on cultural, religious, medical or personal backgrounds, then you might be an ideal candidate.

Would you like to make a positive difference in your workplace? EEO Counselors have the opportunity to share information about the State Employee

both processes at the same time. EEO Counselors can help CAL FIRE to ensure that the workplace is respectful and supportive for all employees. Encouraging use of the mediation program is a critical aspect of achieving that mission. EEO Counselors are ideally situated to share information about mediation and to encourage all employees to use the process early on, to help resolve issues such as workplace disputes and communication problems.

The EEO staff is committed to making certain all CAL FIRE employees are treated fairly in their workplaces and to addressing concerns about EEO issues whenever and wherever they occur. If you're interested in being part of that process, and you believe you have the qualities to be an effective EEO Counselor, EEO would like to hear from you. Check out the EEO Counselor Recruitment Notice and Statement of Interest links on the Intranet homepage, just under the Director's box, or use the links provided below. The deadline to submit a Statement of Interest is January 31, 2007.

Mediation can...

- *Improve your relationships in the workplace*
- *Allow you to maintain control over the outcome*
- *Prevent escalation of the problem*
- *Preserve your rights to pursue further action if no resolution*
- *Assure that your statements made during mediation remain confidential*
- *Resolve conflict-over 90% of cases mediated have resulted in written agreements*

Mediation Program with those who find themselves involved in a workplace dispute. Mediation is always an option for employees who want to move beyond a difficult situation to find a more constructive and positive way to interact with a co-worker. Since the use of mediation doesn't preclude filing an EEO complaint, CAL FIRE personnel can use

Learn more

For more information visit the CAL FIRE intranet

Statement of Interest for EEO Counselor